

T H E
CHILDREN'S FRIEND;

CONSISTING OF
APT TALES, SHORT DIALOGUES
AND MORAL DRAMAS;

ALL INTENDED
To engage ATTENTION, cherish FEELING,
and inculcate VIRTUE, in
THE RISING GENERATION.

TRANSLATED BY
The Rev. MARK ANTHONY MELLAN,
from the FRENCH of M. BERQUIN.

V O L. XV.

L O N D O N :

Printed for the TRANSLATOR, and to be had
of J. BEW, No. 28, Paternoster-Row; and
of C. GEARY, No. 27, Great Marlborough-
Street.

MDCCLXXXVI.

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The APPARITION, *from the Comtesse de Genlis' Lectures, pour les Enfants; there being room for this, in consequence of the abridgment of the Little Gamblers; which in the original, employs one hundred and twenty-eight pages of the volume, and so precludes that variety which is the great recommendation of this work.*

The LITTLE GAMBLERS.





A

STROKE OF POLICY.

A Worthy private gentleman, observing with concern his only son upon the point of taking to a spend-thrift way of living, let him do as he thought proper ; and it was not long before the son had run himself behind hand to a great amount. I'll pay whatever you may ask for, said

A 2

4 *A STROKE of POLICY.*

the father to him, as my honour is much dearer to me than my money; but take notice of what follows: You love joyous living, and I love the poor. I've given away in charity, a great deal less than I was us'd to do, before I thought of your establishment. I'll think no longer of it, as a libertine should never marry; so indulge yourself as much as you think proper; but on this condition: I declare, that when, at any time, you spend beyond the money I allow to keep you as a gentleman, some hospital or other charitable institution, shall receive from me, as much as you require to satisfy your debts; and I'll begin this very day. According-

A STROKE of POLICY. 5

y, the money was that moment order'd to a certain charity; and thus the youth, on being doubly punish'd for his prodigality, was quickly cur'd of a disease that otherwise would have ensur'd his ruin.



T H E
PRUDENT OFFICER.

COLONEL Tavernor, who, by his merit had attain'd to that high rank, observed with great concern the officers belonging to his regiment gave their time and faculties entirely up to play. Intent upon their reformation, he invited them one day to dine with him ; and having brought

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The PRUDENT OFFICER. 7

the conversation round to such a point
that gaming might be naturally intro-
duc'd, he gave them the subjoin'd
short narrative of his own life.

I was no sooner come from college,
than my parents bought me a lieuten-
ancy, then vacant in the regiment, I
have now the honour to command.
The love I had contracted in my in-
fancy for study, made them hope I
should be equally desirous to discharge
the duties of my new condition, and
maintain the reputation they durst
imagine to themselves they were to see
in me. For some few months, I
acted so as not to disappoint their ex-
pectations; but soon after, the per-
ficious model set before me, by my

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brother officers, with their persuasions, having drawn me in to make one with them at their meetings, the insatiate demon *Play* obtain'd such strong possession of my heart, that every duty hindering me from gratifying this new passion, soon became intolerable. I could hardly bring myself to quit the gaming table for an hour, however I might stand in need of rest. In sleep, I dream'd of heaps of gold and silver. I was always shuffling cards, and the continual noise of dice was in my ear.

The natural necessity of eating was become my punishment: I swallow'd up my meat in haste, that I might be

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The PRUDENT OFFICER. 9

as little absent from my gambling partners as I could.

The beauteous mornings of the spring, the charming evenings of the summer, the voluptuous calmness of the weather when 'twas harvest, every thing, in short most capable of pleasing the imagination when it contemplates on nature, was to me entirely lost ; even friendship had no further place within me. I was only in the company of gamesters. The idea of my parents was grown painful to me ; and if ever I reflected upon God, it was in blasphemies pour'd out against his holy name.

At first, I must acknowledge For-
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B

10 *The PRUDENT OFFICER.*

tune was particularly favourable to me; which had so bewildered and debas'd my understanding, as to make me often spread my winnings on the ground, and lie upon them, that all those who knew me might assert with truth, and in the literal sense of the expression, I was us'd to roll on gold.

For three whole years, my life pass'd on in these unworthy occupations. 'Tis impossible for me, at present, to remember them, and keep from blushing at the stain they have reflected on my honour: and if possible, I would efface them now, by giving up a half of the remaining days I have to live. But how shall I presume to mention an excess more

The PRUDENT OFFICER. 11

frightful still, of which no worthy conduct will remove the blot, even after twenty years all pass'd in probity and honour? Judge, my friends, how anxious I must be to render my deplorable example useful to you, by the pain I suffer, when I thus submit to so humiliating a confession.

I was once upon a time, commanded to go out with a recruiting party; but, alas! resign'd the business of it to my serjeant, while I follow'd my unhappy passion. Two days afterwards he brought me twenty men to have their bounty money paid them. I had lost the night before, not only every thing I was possess'd of in the world myself, but likewise the whole

11 *The PRUDENT OFFICER.*

sum deliver'd me for this recruiting service. Think then, Gentlemen, what must have been my sorrow and despair, in such a situation ! I dispatch'd that moment an express to where our regiment lay in quarters ; and ingenuously confessing my misconduct, begg'd a brother officer to lend me what I wanted.

How ! replied that officer, give up so great a sum of money to a gambler by profession ? No ; if I must either lose my property, or give up my connection with a man whose conduct makes his friendship infamous, it is my property I'll keep.

Immediately on reading this insulting answer, I was utterly beside myself ; and still remember, as what

The PRUDENT OFFICER. 13

happen'd yesterday, the dreadful images that all at once came crowding into my imagination : upon one hand, the distress and indignation of my father, the dishonour I was fixing on my family, as well as every one that knew me, and the dread of being broke with infamy ; and on the other hand, the brilliant prospect of that rise I might have come to, by an honourable conduct in my post : nor did I afterwards recover the possession of my understanding, but to think of perpetrating a new crime, that I might be deliver'd from that ignominy which my first would bring upon me. I was ready to go thro' with such a desperate resolution, when I saw the very officer come into

14 *The PRUDENT OFFICER.*

my apartment, whose reply had hurried me, as I have said just now, into this state of madness.

In the first emotion of my rage, I fell upon him like a fiend ; but he disarm'd me very quickly ; and while I but little thought of what was to ensue, embrac'd me, and began as follows. " I replied a little harshly to your letter, as I meant, by such an answer, you should see the horror of that situation into which your rashness has precipitated you ; but I perceive the effect it has upon you. Now that you repent, my property, my life, and every thing I have, you may command, as you think proper."

" Hold, " continued he, and threw

The PRUDENT OFFICER. 15

his purse upon the table, "here is what will serve to pay your new recruits: and the remainder may supply you at the gaming-table, if you mean returning thither."

Mean returning to the gaming-table! Never, never; answer'd I; and clasp'd him to my heart.

Since which, I have precisely kept my word. From that day forward, I determin'd to have done with all expensive pleasures, and apply my savings to the purpose of repaying what my generous friend had lent me. I employ'd my leisure time in study. My attention to the service recommended me to my superiors; and to such a happy revolution in the course

16 *The PRUDENT OFFICER.*

of my affairs, I am indebted for the honour of my present station in the army.

This recital made so powerful an impression on his officers, that every game of hazard ceas'd among them, and a noble emulation to arrive at useful knowledge, quenched that low ambition to win money that before was in them. Such was the good consequence resulting from their prudent Colonel's lesson.

T H E

A P P A R I T I O N .

THOMAS, (*entering to Ferdinand and Theodore,*)

WELL, young gentlemen; what now?

FERDINAND.

Here, Thomas, is the key belonging to our chest, in No. 4. Papa has me have it to get out our sky-

18 *THE APPARITION.*

blue cloaths, since we shall go abroad to-morrow : pray, go fetch them for us.

THOMAS.

What ! it seems then you are still afraid of entering your Mama's apartment ? But 'tis now above a fortnight since her burial. Your Papa will have you go yourself. So pray obey him, Master Ferdinand.

FERDINAND.

I dare not, Thomas, go alone. Will you come with me, Brother ?

THEODORE.

No ; not I, indeed : unless, you, Thomas, will go with us both.

THOMAS.

For shame, young gentlemen ! You

THE APPARITION. 19

ould be more courageous. Your
papa will have it so. Can you sup-
pose your dear mama, that lov'd you
so will quit her grave, to do you
any harm? No, no: when any one
is dead, she's dead in earnest.

FERDINAND.

Yes, that's true indeed; and yet,
I dare not go. I would much rather
keep my worst cloaths on to-mor-
row.

THEODORE.

But not I; and therefore, though
you, Ferdinand, are so much of the
child, I'll go and fetch my cloaths:
let me have the key.

20 THE APPARITION.

FERDINAND.

There, Theodore ; and as you're going, pray bring mine too, with you.

THEODORE.

No: not I. For my Papa means otherwise : and you shall go yourself if ever you put on your cloaths. I'll show you very soon there's nothing you need be afraid of ; for I'll go alone. The chest, (*to Thomas.*) I think, is on the left-hand side, as you go in ?

THOMAS

Yes, yes ; close by the opening of the door. (*Theodore takes a candle and goes out.*) Well, Master Ferdinand, must say I should be ashamed of my behaviour, were I you ; to see me

THE APPARITION. 21

younger brother have more courage
than myself.

FERDINAND.

O, let him boast, as much as he
thinks proper, of his courage. It will
be however very great ill-nature if he
does not bring my cloaths too with
him.

THOMAS.

Should he bring them, you'll not
be a whit the better upon that ac-
count; as I shall take them back. I
must do so; and 'tis my master's or-
ders. He has absolutely told me you
shall get them out yourself.

FERDINAND.

If you should do so, I shall say you
are much more ill-natur'd than my
brother would have been.

THOMAS.

And I shall say you are a little coward, to be thus afraid of apparitions. Look ye, Master Theodore's now coming back; and is a great deal stout than his elder brother. Well, (*Theodore as he is coming in,*) and what may you have seen?

THEODORE.

Seen? Nothing. And my brother's in the wrong to be afraid.

FERDINAND.

You have not brought me mine?

THEODORE.

No truly. There's the key; and if you want your cloaths, go fetch them. (*He puts his cloaths in order on a chair.*)

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FERDINAND.

No; not I. I'd rather go to-morrow in my old ones.

THOMAS.

Ha! here's your papa. I'll leave you. (*He goes out.*)

Mr. GROVE, (*coming in,*)

So; I see you've had the courage to get out your cloaths at last; and as it you, pray, Ferdinand,—(*looking at the cloaths*)—But what! here's the suit only!—How comes that about?

THEODORE.

'Tis mine, papa; I went to get it myself; but Ferdinand was so afraid, he would not go for his.

Mr. GROVE.

And are you really afraid of going

24 *THE APPARITION.*

thither; and particularly, when your brother, though much younger than yourself, has been, and neither seen nor yet heard any thing?

FERDINAND.

Yes, dear papa: I am indeed afraid for Robert, that you turn'd away last Whitsuntide, was used to tell me every night so many dismal stories of hobgoblins, and the like, that I could never get the better of it.

MR. GROVE.

Well then, I must cure you, if I can, of such a weakness; so pray let me argue with you.

FERDINAND,

Yes, papa.

MR. GROVE.

You've been afraid of entering your Mama's apartment, ever since she died; but do you think it likely, that the dead should have it in their power to fright the living? If the case were so, we could not live in peace, by day or night; for if but one could quit his grave, and come among us, others might; and there are such a multitude have died, since first the world began, we should not possibly know where to hide ourselves, if there were really such things as spirits.— Do you understand me, hitherto?

FERDINAND.

Yes, very clearly.

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THEODORE.

That's what I am always saying likewise, for you've said as much to me before, Papa, if you remember but he won't believe me.

FERDINAND.

What you say, Papa, is very clear but there are, notwithstanding, such a multitude of stories told by reasonable folks of apparitions, that have walked by night, undrawn their curtains, and the like, that there must be some truth in what so many people say.

MR. GROVE.

In every story, we must own, there is a natural event, which were it well examined, would have nothing wonderful therein; but which occasions terror, when 'tis hastily imputed

THE APPARITION. 27

a cause, which is not, in reality, the true one ; and which cause appears prodigious, nay, I will allow miraculous, since 'tis not properly reflected on. For instance, when my grandfather had been but three weeks dead, and I was near about your age, my father sent me down one night into the cellar, for some cyder, which he kept lock'd up. But, I had hardly got into the cellar, when I thought I saw his apparition all in white, and standing in a corner of it.

FERDINAND.

O how frightful ! and no doubt you thought so ?

Mr. GROVE.

Yes, indeed : I turn'd about, and

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scream'd with all my might, on which, my father came down stairs, and ask'd what ail'd me? I made shift to point behind me, and cried out, see, see there in the corner! What a frightful ghost! and all in white! A ghost, said he, in white? there's nothing I can see, except a leg of mutton, which the cook has covered with a table cloth to keep the flies off. Is it that you call a ghost?

THEODORE, (*laughing,*)

Ah! ha!

MR. GROVE.

Judge, therefore, how ashamed I was; whereas if I had not been undeceiv'd, I should have got it certainly into my head, that my poor Grandfather had left his grave,

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THE APPARITION. 29

come and haunt the cellar ; having
thought I saw him there.

FERDINAND.

Yes, yes ; that's certain.

MR. GROVE.

You perceive, I was a fool in be-
ing thus afraid ; and this affair com-
pletely cur'd me afterward, of dread-
ing spirits. Be assur'd, 'tis just the
same respecting every story told about
them.

THEODORE.

O Papa, now I remember, tell him
that about the lawyer's clerk, whose
papers us'd to dance about the room
at midnight : 'tis a very funny one.
You told it me, when we were in the
country ; and it cur'd me of believing

30 THE APPARITION.

there could be such things as ghosts.

MR. GROVE.

Well, tell it for me, since no doubt you recollect the whole.

THEODORE.

I tell it ?

MR. GROVE.

Yes ; as briefly and as clearly as you can.

THEODORE.

I'll see if I remember.—Yes ; I have it.—There was once a lawyer's clerk then,—

MR. GROVE.

There was once!—Why you begin old woman-like. Come rather to the point immediately, and say : A lawyer's clerk.

THEODORE.

A lawyer's clerk had chambers in

THE APPARITION. 31

the Temple : and next him, there was another young man lodg'd ; their bedrooms being separated by a thin partition. Now the clerk and he were very intimate. This last prefer'd the other's chambers to his own, as being more commodious, and commanding a much better view ; and so, to get them, he contriv'd a very cunning scheme ?

MR. GROVE.

And so ? Avoid that word as much as possible. Relate the fact, that it may first of all surprize, and then point out the reason ; so shall what you have to say, both interest and entertain.

THEODORE.

I will, Papa. The young clerk's father died about this time ; and two

nights afterward, he heard and saw the papers dancing on the table. He was frighten'd, and next morning put them up in order; when behold ye, the same happen'd on the following night. Says he, my father's spirit sure must walk, says he.

MR. GROVE.

Says he, says he? No repetitions.

THEODORE.

No, Papa: But yet, I'll see if there's no trick in this. He did so; and discover'd there were several thread, about a dozen, which his next door neighbour had contriv'd to fasten to as many papers, laid beneath the others, and which threads were made to pass through holes in the partition, that divided the two sleeping rooms.

THE APPARITION. 33

FERDINAND.

Oh ho!

THEODORE.

He now examin'd the partition;
and discover'd a loose pannel in it:
thro' this pannel, it was plain he pass'd
to set his traps in order, and at night
would pull the threads and fright him.

MR. GROVE.

He and him! You should distinguish one from t'other.

THEODORE.

Certainly, Papa; but I believe, my brother understands me.

FERDINAND.

O yes; very well. How cunning!
I should never have imagin'd such a
scheme! And now, the lawyer's clerk,
fancy, was afraid no longer.

THEODORE.

No, indeed ; but it was now his turn to scare the other ; and accordingly, the very night succeeding this discovery, while the papers were, as usual, set a dancing, what does our young lawyer do, but give the threads a jirk himself, by means of other threads he had before dispos'd of for the purpose ? and thus, brother, was the biter bit ; he thought the father's spirit really was come, and cried out, *Help !* The other jump'd that moment out of bed, and came to his assistance. The whole plot on both sides was unravell'd, and the young man's schemes to get the other's chambers totally defeated. Thus you see, that

THE APPARITION. 35

Stories about ghosts are all ridiculous,
and should not fright you.

MR. GROVE.

Well! to say the truth, you've
told your story admirably!

FERDINAND.

Yes, indeed; and cur'd me of my
apprehensions: so I'll go and fetch
my cloaths. (*To Theodore*) Give
me the key.

MR. GROVE.

You think, you're bold enough to
do so?

FERDINAND.

Yes, Papa, as bold as Theodore;
as you shall see.

MR. GROVE.

That's right: so take the candle.

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MR. GROVE, (*after Ferdinand is gone,*)

You've done the business with your story ; and I'm very glad : for 'tis a shame, that any one, as old as Ferdinand, should be afraid of ghosts.

THEODORE.

For my part, I shall never be afraid of them in future ; but I'm sure, my brother's heart went pit-a-pat, as he was going out.

MR. GROVE.

Indeed, I think so, likewise ; but that's not amiss. He cannot, all at once, become a hero ; and it proves he was resolv'd to get the better of his cowardice.

FERDINAND, (*within,*)

Help ! help ! Papa ! Come to

THE APPARITION. 37

me! (*he returns quite pale, and with his candle out.*)

MR. GROVE.

Well, and what's the matter? What has happen'd?

FERDINAND.

Ah Papa; believe me, if you please, or not, but 'tis quite certain that I felt—

MR. GROVE.

Felt! what?

FERDINAND.

I felt, as soon as I had open'd and flung back the door, while I was entering, something strike me in the face, and put my light out.

MR. GROVE.

Something strike you in the face? and what?—A likely business, truly!

FERDINAND.

Likely, or unlikely, 'tis quite true
and I'm all over in a sweat: besides,
my candle's out, and, as you see, the
snuff beat down. I hope, Papa, that
shows you I don't tell a story.

MR. GROVE.

Something's hid beneath all this.
I'm sure. I'll go and see. So light
the candle.—Stay here both. I'll
not be long. (*he goes out.*)

THEODORE.

It struck you in the face, and put
your light out! Very strange indeed!
If it should be Mama! Can you re-
member having lately vexed her.

FERDINAND.

O yes, now I think thereon I can.
She wanted me one morning, and no

THE APPARITION. 39

long before she died, to learn the Sunday's collect; and I would not: She was angry with me, and 'tis that, perhaps, has brought her ghost into the room.

THEODORE.

Aye, like enough indeed. You should have mention'd that before. For my part, Ferdinand, I never made her angry, and on that account, her apparition would not hurt me.

FERDINAND.

You see however I was in the right to say I durst not go into the room alone; and if you ever catch me there again, I'll give you leave to——

THEODORE, (*to Mr. Grove coming back,*)

O now Papa, we know the reason



40 THE APPARITION.

of all this. So give yourself no further trouble.

MR. GROVE.

And I too have found it out. But in the first place, tell me what it is you know.

THEODORE.

Why, Ferdinand has just this moment told me he had vex'd Mama a little while before she died ; and therefore 'twas to punish him——

MR. GROVE.

And so you, Theodore, would sink again into your former childish apprehensions ! You that I suppos'd more manly ! Hear me, (*to Ferdinand*) I have found what struck you on the face, and put your light out. Just above the door, you know there is

THE APPARITION. 41

fan light, higher than the cover'd passage leading to it, over which you recollect the curtain, that is long enough, when down, to reach the floor, and keep the cold out, as we sit there in the winter. Well, this curtain, you may easily imagine, was drawn up when last we left it; but since then, it seems that one of the two hooks round which the line is turn'd, by some means or another, has come out, and caus'd the curtain to descend as low as to the lock or thereabouts. The door, in opening, carried back the curtain while it rested on the top, till at a certain distance, it flipp'd over it, and so came down upon you. This was the occasion of the blow you

42 *THE APPARITION.*

felt, and thus too was your light put out. It did not serve you so, (*to Theodore*) because instead of flinging back the door, like Ferdinand, for so he said just now he did, you open'd it no wider than was just enough to let you enter. But 'tis not sufficient, Ferdinand, I should but mention this, if I would cure you of those foolish notions you give way to. You^r shall see it, and not have a doubt remaining: So pray follow me.

FERDINAND.

Yes, I begin to apprehend the whole. — A currain frighten me! Well, who could have imagin'd it? Let me but see this dreadful apparition, and I'll never be afraid again.

T H E

LITTLE GAMBLERS.

A DRAMA IN TWO ACTS.

D 2

CHARACTERS.

Mr. GRANDISON.

JULIANA, *his daughter.*

VICTOR, *his son.*

RUPERT, *Victor's neighbour.*

BERNARD, *his friend.*

RICH, }
BOYD, } *Gamblers.*
CRIB, }

The Scene is in the garden of Mr. Grandison; during the first act, in one part; after which, it changes to another part.

T H E

LITTLE GAMBLERS.

A C T I.

S C E N E I.

RUPERT and BERNARD.

BERNARD.

WHAT have you to do at Victor's,
then?

RUPERT.

I want to have a little conversation

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with him, Bernard : and you know him, likewise ?

BERNARD.

Yes ; by sight. You have not always been so intimate, I fancy, as you are at present ?

RUPERT.

Not before my father took a lodging here, adjoining his apartments. We see one another often now ; and last night, were together, for an hour or two, at cards.

BERNARD.

I think, of late, you talk of nothing else but cards : and I have seen you frequently with Rich and Boyd ; of whom, I can't say any good.

RUPERT.

You know them but too well : and

The **LITTLE GAMBLERS.** 47

would to Heaven that I had never seen them !

BERNARD.

Is it so ? but you may break off their acquaintance, when you please ?

RUPERT.

'Tis not, at present, in my power ; would you betray me, if I told you something ?

BERNARD.

We have long been friends ; and would you fear to trust me, Rupert ?

RUPERT.

O my dear good Bernard ! they have made me miserable, and engag'd me to do things, for which, my father would renounce me, if he knew them. I have not a moment's peace.

D 4

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BERNARD.

Alas ! what are they ?

RUPERT.

Yesterday they got me to go with them to a place. where one *Crib* waited for them ; we sat down to play ; and I lost all I had.

BERNARD.

They cheated you, no doubt ? but still, there's no great mischief done ; for never play again, and then your loss will be a gain.

RUPERT.

But this is not the whole. As I had no more money, and still wanted to win back my loss, I still play'd on ; and in the end, they got possession of my watch, my coat and

The LITTLE GAMBLERS. 49

waistcoat-buttons, buckles, and in short, of every thing I had worth selling. I owe Crib a guinea likewise, and he'll tell my father, if to-day I can't find means to pay him.

BERNARD.

There's but one thing you can do : confess the whole directly to your father. I am sure he'll pardon you, on your repentance.

RUPERT.

Never, never.

BERNARD.

What then will you do ?

RUPERT.

I dare not tell you.

BERNARD.

Let me know it.

50 *The LITTLE GAMBLERS.*

RUPERT.

I communicated my distress to Rich and Boyd, and they advised a scheme to extricate me.

BERNARD.

A fine scheme, no doubt!

RUPERT.

It is not certainly the fairest, as you'll say; but what am I at liberty to do? I have already introduced them to young Victor. He has money.

BERNARD.

Well; you don't intend to rob him surely?

RUPERT.

Heaven forbid! they only mean to serve him just as Crib served me, and then we are to share the winnings so that I may pay my debt.

The LITTLE GAMBLERS. 51

BERNARD.

And so, because you have yourself
been pillag'd, you would aid them
to defraud your friend too? But how
know you Victor will not win?

RUPERT.

Oh no; he plays quite fair.

BERNARD.

And you then like a sharper?

RUPERT.

Like a sharper?

BERNARD.

No; I'm sensible you play as fair
as Victor, and on that account you
lost: now, as I hope you always
mean to play so, how can you be sure
of winning then?

RUPERT.

I don't know how it is; but they

52 *The* **LITTLE GAMBLERS.**

inform me, they have certain ways by which they're sure of winning.

BERNARD.

Ways! they're knavish tricks; and would you use them? I'm not rich and yet I would not mend my fortune by your certain ways. I'm ever sorry you have told me your intention.

RUPERT.

My dear Bernard, have compassion on me, and I promise——

BERNARD.

Promise! what can bring me to assist in your deception?

RUPERT.

No; I mean to say, that if I'm but so lucky as to pay this odious Crib I'll break off all connection with him and his friends, and never touch

The LITTLE GAMBLERS. 53

ard again. If I should break this promise, you shall be at liberty to tell my father every thing. (*Bernard takes his head.*) Yes, every thing. And then, it will not rest with me to cheat; I cannot if I would, and Crib has taken that upon himself. I shall not play my cards; they've promised I shall be no loser, but divide the proceeds with them.

BERNARD.

Well; I'll make a party with you.

RUPERT.

I desire no better, and will instantly write young Victor for the afternoon. His father is at present in the country, and will not come back perhaps these three weeks.

54 *The* **LITTLE GAMBLERS.**

BERNARD.

Quite convenient ! but take notice if yourself should cheat him——

RUPERT.

Don't talk so ; I wish I had not told you the affair.

BERNARD.

And so do I. I should not then be answerable for it.

RUPERT.

Answerable ?

BERNARD.

To my conscience surely. I can see, a worthy youth is on the point of being cheated.

RUPERT.

But it is not you will cheat him.

BERNARD.

Rupert, if you saw a thief even pick

es. *The LITTLE GAMBLERS.* 55
stranger's pocket, ought you to keep
otice silence?

RUPERT.

Victor will but lose two, three, or
d no possibly four guineas, and be cured of
laying.

BERNARD.

en b Just as you are cur'd; but here
comes Victor, I observe.

SCENE III.

I can
int of
RUPERT, BERNARD, VICTOR.

VICTOR.

n.
a pick
GOOD morrow to you both.

56 *The LITTLE GAMBLERS.*

BERNARD.

Good morrow, Victor.

RUPERT.

What, you have not yet been down into the garden, when 'tis such fine weather?

BERNARD.

Mr. Victor does not like to run about as you do; and can entertain himself in his apartment.

VICTOR.

Yes; but I have been already walking in the garden; and even breakfasted with Juliana and my father, in the grove.

RUPERT, (*surprised,*)

Is he return'd so soon? I fancy you're not satisfied at that,

The LITTLE GAMBLERS. 57

VICTOR.

Not satisfied ! when he has been
three weeks away ?

RUPERT.

I love my parents well enough ;
and yet, if they should take it in their
heads to travel, 'twould not vex me.

VICTOR.

And for my part, I could wish my
father never out of sight, he's so ex-
tremely kind !

RUPERT.

And mine so harsh, I must not think
of pleasure when he's near me.

BERNARD.

Who can tell what pleasures you
expect ?

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E

58 *The LITTLE GAMBLERS.*

VICTOR.

I thought you were in want of nothing on that head. Since we have lodg'd together, I have almost every day observ'd you at the door; and when I've met you in the garden, never could I see you under any thing appearing like restraint.

RUPERT.

No, no; I've always met you on the days my father din'd abroad, and that's the only time I have to use as I think proper; therefore I do turn it to account. But now your father is come home, I take it we shall see you quite so often in an evening?

VICTOR.

Why not, Rupert? he refuses me no pleasure I can ask; however,

The **LITTLE GAMBLERS.** 59

must say, I find no company like his ;
and he, too, frequently has said he
thinks my company and Juliana's
quite delightful.

RUPERT.

What a charming father ! so then,
he permits you to go out both when
and where you like ?

VICTOR.

He does, because I always tell him
where I'm going.

BERNARD.

And because he knows you never
go but where you tell him ?

RUPERT.

What then do you do for entertain-
ment, when you're both together ?

60 *The LITTLE GAMBLERS.*

VICTOR.

In the summer evenings, frequently
we take a walk.

RUPERT.

In winter ?

VICTOR.

We sit down before the fire, and
talk of fifty curious matters; or I study
geography, and take a lesson in the
mathematics. Sometimes too, with
Juliana and a friend or two, we act a
little drama of some kind or other.
You can't think how that amuses us !

RUPERT.

But sure, such different studies are
enough to crack your brain !

VICTOR.

Upon the other hand, they come of
course, as if they were a game.

The LITTLE GAMBLERS. 61

RUPERT.

A game at cards I should suppose much more delightful. Do you ever play at them ?

VICTOR.

Yes truly ; and my father frequently makes one.

RUPERT.

And do you play for money ?

VICTOR.

Doubtless ; but a trifle notwithstanding, just enough to interest one ; and particularly as by that, my father says one learns to lose with temper.

BERNARD.

That's quite right ; one ought to husband, as they say, one's purse.

62 *The LITTLE GAMBLERS.*

VICTOR.

Oh, don't imagine I want money.
I have more than I can use.

RUPERT.

How much ?

VICTOR.

A crown a week.

RUPERT.

A good allowance, truly ! and all
that to purchase trifles ?

VICTOR.

Yes ; such trifles as my father
would not like to have me trouble him
about ; and that, I must acknowledge,
makes me much more careful.

BERNARD.

I believe so : one can hardly chuse
but know the worth of things, when
one must pay for them one's self.

The LITTLE GAMBLERS. 63

VICTOR.

True, Bernard. And besides, one naturally saves in that case, as myself have found it ; so that, what with presents, and some other matters, I have now five guineas in my pocket, without reckoning silver ?

RUPERT.

Such a deal ! and how can you employ it ?

VICTOR.

Have I nothing then to buy ? However, I can otherwise dispose thereof. I pay to have our footman's daughter put to school ; and every Monday morning send a trifle to a writing-master I had once, and who is now grown blind : these, both to-

64 *The* **LITTLE GAMBLERS.**

gether, make up something ; and I keep the rest for ordinary uses, and among them, play.

RUPERT.

At which you're tolerably lucky. You remember, you won half a crown of me the other night, at *One-and-thirty*.

VICTOR.

I was sorry, as I always am, to win of friends.

RUPERT.

Then you shall have an opportunity at night of losing, if you think but fit. Are you engag'd ?

VICTOR.

No ; I shall stay at home. My father is to draw out a petition for a

The LITTLE GAMBLERS. 65

I widow woman, who would get into an
nd alms-house.

RUPERT.

y. That's quite well. And mine goes
a out at five. Come then to me, and
c. I'll endeavour to amuse you. We
shall have Rich, Boyd, and Crib.

VICTOR.

n I'll run and ask my father's leave ;
shall you be here when I return ?

RUPERT.

- No ; I must go and give them notice
t of the party ; but your answer, Mr,
Bernard will bring to me.

66 *The LITTLE GAMBLERS.*

SCENE III.

BERNARD, VICTOR.

VICTOR.

WILL you go in with me, Mr. Bernard? I am sure my father will be very glad to see you ; he has often told me what a great esteem he has conceiv'd, this long while, for you !

BERNARD.

I am very happy in his partiality. The esteem of such a gentleman is highly honorable ; but at present, I am rather indisposed, and shall remain, with your permission, in the garden.

The **LITTLE GAMBLERS.** 67

VICTOR.

Do; a turn or two will settle you;
and I shall not be absent long.

(He goes out.)

BERNARD, *(alone.)*

I don't know what to do in this
affair! poor Rupert is afflicted! I
should like to extricate him, but to let
the worthy Victor fall a victim! no,
the accomplice is not better than the
robber; and to favour roguery is just
as bad as doing it. I'll therefore go
and tell the whole. But, softly;
here comes Juliana. Let me first of
all do every thing I can to aid her in
preserving Victor from the danger,
and yet not betray my friend.

S C E N E IV.

BERNARD, JULIANA.

JULIANA.

WHAT, you here, Mr. Bernard!
and alone! I thought I saw my bro-
ther talking with you?

BERNARD.

He has just now left me.

JULIANA.

I should like he never were to leave
you, if his company were but agree-
able to you: I should not be uneasy
then.

BERNARD.

You do me honour, miss; but

The **LITTLE GAMBLERS.** 69

surely Mr. Victor is too sensible to give you any pain.

JULIANA.

I have no pain while he keeps company with such as you ; but, shall I come directly to the point ? I don't think any good of those frequenting Rupert's company : and he by all means wants to mix with them.

BERNARD.

I have not yet perceiv'd their company has hurt him.

JULIANA.

True ; but my poor brother, I must say, is innocent, and somewhat credulous ; he judges every one is like himself. What would become of him, if those he thinks his friends, were what they should not be ? I

70 *The LITTLE GAMBLERS.*

have remark'd, you do not much approve of Rupert's intimates.

BERNARD.

To say the truth, my dear young lady, I should rather wish that Rupert would be satisfied with Mr. Victor's friendship. There is one advantage notwithstanding ; that his father watches over him, as yours does over Victor, and instructs him what to do

JULIANA.

The mischief often is remarked too late ; 'tis easier to prevent than cure it

BERNARD.

I am sure you love your brother tenderly, and therefore hear me ; but tell no one it was I that mentioned what I'm going now to say. Young Rupert has prevailed upon him, just

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Victor,

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The LITTLE GAMBLERS. 71

before you enter'd, to make one with him and his three intimates. They mean to play no doubt ; but do your utmost to divert your brother from partaking with them. I designed to wait here for his answer, but don't think 'tis proper I should carry it. I make no doubt but he will quickly bring it. Pray, don't judge amiss of me that I retire : and think of the advice my duty, as a friend to Mr. Victor, bade me give you.

S C E N E V.

JULIANA, (alone,)

AS a friend ! This looks a little
jealous ! Ah, my poor dear brother !

72 *The LITTLE GAMBLERS.*

should it chance that you, who are at present all the joy and consolation of my father, were to change, and be the cause of his affliction for the time to come !

VICTOR, (*re-entering,*)

My father's friends are willing, I can see, to take the earliest opportunity of paying him their compliments on his arrival, just as if he had been absent for a twelvemonth. I could not how thrust a word in.

JULIANA.

You had something then of consequence to tell him ?

VICTOR.

Of the greatest consequence to me

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friends

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VOL.

The **LITTLE GAMBLERS.** 73

I want to pass the evening with my friends.

JULIANA.

With Mr. Rupert, doubtless?

VICTOR.

Yes.

JULIANA.

I thought so. You might easily have guess'd however, such a friend as Rupert does not please me.

VICTOR.

Truly, Rupert's greatly to be pitied, being so unfortunate as not to have a place in your good graces! And what should he be, to merit such an honour?

JULIANA.

He should be—just such a one as you are.

74 *The LITTLE GAMBLERS.*

VICTOR.

Do you mean to joke?

JULIANA.

No: I am very serious, I assure you; and consider you a very amiable young man without a fault, unless indeed it be the want of due politeness to your sister.

VICTOR.

And why so? because that sister is a little critic, and pretends to greater understanding than her brother.

JULIANA.

Truly, I had quite forgot to mention modesty, when I was drawing up your panegyric.

VICTOR.

But what means this prating? and pray tell me, why these intimations

The LITTLE GAMBLERS. 75

with regard to Rupert ? Do you know him ?

JULIANA.

I would know him by his actions.

VICTOR.

Are you always by him, to remark them ?

JULIANA.

I can guess them from the company he keeps.

VICTOR.

I understand you perfectly : his company displeases you, because I'm one that is acquainted with him.

JULIANA.

Surely, Brother, he must have acquaintances of longer standing than

76 *The LITTLE GAMBLERS.*

yourself; and them I speak of, as I would of good-for-nothing fellows.

VICTOR.

Good-for-nothing fellows?

JULIANA.

Yes that play, and practise each dishonourable trick to win their adversary's money, and then spend it more dishonourably still.

VICTOR.

O, what two great crimes! they play when they are got together; and they spend their winnings as they please. We do the same, I fancy. And besides, you say they play to win; but they have often lost to me.

JULIANA.

Yes, yes; they've lost their copper, and have won your silver.

The LITTLE GAMBLERS. 77

VICTOR.

Well and if they have, the loss was mine, not yours. But this is just like what my sister is. She would be sorry if she could not vex me in my pleasures, notwithstanding I do every thing to heighten her's.

JULIANA, (*taking him by the hand,*)

No, brother; every pleasure you can have, is also mine; but for the world, I would not have your pleasures hurt you, and deprive me of the satisfaction I receive from loving you.

VICTOR.

I know indeed you love me; but am hurt to find you fancy I'm incapable to guide myself.

78 *The LITTLE GAMBLERS.*

JULIANA.

And yet you would not be the first
that—but here comes my father.

SCENE VI.

JULIANA, VICTOR, and Mr. GRANDISON.

Mr. GRANDISON.

MY dear children, I have just now
been enjoying a delightful satisfaction!

JULIANA.

That of being visited on your return by your acquaintance, I suppose

The LITTLE GAMBLERS. 79

you mean? But certainly, your friends must cherish you, when we who are restrain'd by your authority, rejoice as much as they can do.

VICTOR.

Yes, truly; for without you, we can find no pleasure.

Mr. GRANDISON.

You must notwithstanding learn to do without me; since according to the ordinary course of nature, I shall certainly go first.

JULIANA.

O, Sir, would you afflict us at a time we thought of nothing but rejoicing?

VICTOR.

Yes, Sir, you will live, and long we

80 *The LITTLE GAMBLERS.*

hope, for our advantage. But let's talk no more on such a gloomy subject.—I've a little favour to request.

MR. GRANDISON.

Well, come, let's hear it.

VICTOR.

Mr. Rupert—your're acquainted with his father—Well, he has invited me to spend the evening with him.

MR. GRANDISON.

You have then a new acquaintance. I am glad you pick up such good company, so near you.

JULIANA.

You hear that? good company!

VICTOR.

I think him so; I have already fate down with him several times, and he

The LITTLE GAMBLERS. 81

has introduced me also to some friends
of his.

JULIANA.

Good company, I fancy likewise!

VICTOR.

Yes, for I must know them better
sure than you.

Mr. GRANDISON.

When I employ'd the words *'good
company*, I meant discreet and well
brought up.

VICTOR.

Yes, Sir, extremely so.

JULIANA.

And how are you to know they're
such, as you have only seen them once
or twice?

82 *The LITTLE GAMBLERS.*

VICTOR.

But have I not been hours together
with them ?

Mr. GRANDISON.

How did your acquaintanceship
begin ?

JULIANA.

At play !

VICTOR.

And why not so ? My father lets
me play.

Mr. GRANDISON.

'Tis true for recreation, and for
such a sum as being gain'd, will not
induce the immoderate love of money,
or if lost, not put one out of temper ;
and this likewise, at a time, when no
thing can be done more profitable.

The LITTLE GAMBLERS. 83

JULIANA.

But I thought, Sir, something might be always done more profitable?

VICTOR.

Yes if, as for instance, speaking for myself, I could but nail my thoughts continually to some book or other.

Mr. GRANDISON.

The remark of Juliana's not amiss. One may employ a leisure evening, better than at play, no doubt, if people would be always rational, or even innocently mirthful; but as scandal sometimes will go round, or folly, in such case, you know, I bid you play, and often take a part myself.

JULIANA.

And these I doubt not, Brother, are the reasons why you play?

84 *The LITTLE GAMBLERS.*

VICTOR.

I don't see any right you have to catechize me.

MR. GRANDISON.

But why take offence at what she says through friendship?

VICTOR.

Rather, sir, from a desire to hurt me in your thoughts.

MR. GRANDISON.

Can you conceive such notions of your sister?

JULIANA, (*with a tone of tenderness,*)
Brother!

VICTOR, (*with the same tone,*)

Juliana, pardon me: I'm in the wrong to tax you thus: but grant, however, your insinuations unavoidably must hurt me.

The **LITTLE GAMBLERS.** 85

Mr. GRANDISON.

Her suspicions may have some foundation, that reflect not upon you : we need not fear, I think, our dispositions towards each other, so united as we are. (*Juliana and Victor take their father by the hand.*)

JULIANA.

O sir, how good you are !

VICTOR.

You lay by all a father's rights, and are our friend.

Mr. GRANDISON.

If I were any other than your friend, I should not be compleatly qualified to bring you up. I might perhaps connive at your neglecting outward ceremonies of respect ; but not your failure in that confidence I

86 *The LITTLE GAMBLERS.*

look for from your tendernefs. You should not have a secret you would keep hid from me, as whenever you may chance to be in danger, my experience may preserve you from it. Let me therefore ask you, Juliana, what are the objections you have form'd againſt your brother's new connections ?

JULIANA.

They are always taken up with cards.

VICTOR.

Who told you ſo ?

JULIANA.

No matter, who I have my information from: the thing is, whether it be true ?

The LITTLE GAMBLERS. 87

Mr. GRANDISON.

I have already told you what I think of playing: every thing depends upon the game you play at.

VICTOR.

O it needs no great attention: 'tis the game of *One and thirty*.

Mr. GRANDISON.

I confess, I don't approve it much.

VICTOR.

Why not? There can be nothing in the world so innocent. Whoever's one and thirty, or the nearest to it, wins.

Mr. GRANDISON.

And do you know, 'tis what we call a game of chance?

VICTOR.

Because one has a chance to win or

lose ? and must not this be said of every game ?

MR. GRANDISON.

With this material difference ; that at *One and thirty*, chance alone decides ; whereas, in many others, skill is to be shown. In short, one wants but fingers and no head for games of chance : and in my thought, such games are utterly unworthy of a thinking man.

JULIANA.

They cannot even amuse one.

VICTOR.

Don't say so, dear sister. There's a deal of pleasure in expecting such or such a card as one may want.

Mr.

The LITTLE GAMBLERS. 89

Mr. GRANDISON.

Because the love of money makes it so. And as this love of money operates very powerfully, 'tis a strong temptation for ten thousand rogues to follow gaming as a trade; and therefore, unsuspecting people generally are their dupes.

VICTOR.

Do you believe so, sir? but how?

JULIANA.

I fancy, they must have some art or other, to arrange the pack in such a way, as to obtain what cards they want.

Mr. GRANDISON.

Yes, that is in reality their secret. I can't tell their method; but aim

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99 *The LITTLE GAMBLERS.*
certain they employ some method,
and have seen deplorable examples of
it in my travels.

VICTOR.

O pray tell us, what examples?

Mr. GRANDISON.

With a deal of pleasure. When
at Bath, I was acquainted with a
young gentleman, who lost one night
above twelve thousand pounds, which
was his all.

JULIANA.

His all! poor youth! and what
then did he do to live?

VICTOR.

He must have been beside himself.

Mr. GRANDISON.

Despair obtain'd possession of his fea-
tures, when he saw his fortune irre-

The LITTLE GAMBLERS. 97

trievably thus lost. He look'd so frightful, I was forc'd to turn away my sight; he gnash'd his teeth, pluck'd up his hair by handfuls, and beat violently on his breast: he gasp'd and panted like a dying man, and left the room quite mad.

VICTOR.

And pray, sir, among those who won his money, was there no one who would give it back, as I should certainly have done?

MR. GRANDISON.

They kept their seats; and still continu'd playing on: or if they turn'd off their attention from the cards, it was to look upon him with contempt.

92 *The LITTLE GAMBLERS.*

JULIANA.

The wicked wretches !

Mr. GRANDISON.

But the worst part of the story is as follows: That this poor young man destroy'd himself before the morning.

JULIANA.

O how shocking !

VICTOR.

Dreadful ! and from henceforth, sir, I'll never touch a card, I promise you. I'll run, and tell this Rupert—

Mr. GRANDISON.

Softly, softly : you are always much too hasty in your resolutions. One should never wholly give a pleasure up, because, when carried to excess, it may be hurtful. I have often told

The **LITTLE GAMBLERS.** 93

you, that a game at cards, when friends are met together, is amusing, innocent, and even useful. .

JULIANA.

Useful, sir?

MR. GRANDISON.

Yes, useful; as it teaches us to bear our fortune; and not triumph when we win, or be dejected at our little losses.

VICTOR.

Heaven be prais'd, I'm not so fond of money, as to hurt another by my insults in good fortune: or evince I'm hurt myself, by being vex'd when I'm unlucky: but to shun what possibly might happen, 'twill be better for me not to visit either Rupert or his friends.

Mr. GRANDISON.

You would be only weak, if this should be your final resolution: for at least, you have it in your power, when with them, to refrain from playing.

VICTOR.

O I know them: they would absolutely make me play.

Mr. GRANDISON.

Well, play as much as they would have you; as by that means, you will gain a better knowledge of them. But instead of going to this Rupert, or his friends, invite them hither. You may also tell them, Juliana very likely will make one.

JULIANA.

But, fir—

The LITTLE GAMBLERS. 95

Mr. GRANDISON.

Yes, yes ; I have a reason.

JULIANA.

But suppose they win my money ?

Mr. GRANDISON.

You shall have it all from me again.
And tell them, Victor, you expect a
friend, whom you'll prevail on to sit
down and play amongst them.

VICTOR.

But, you know, sir, I expect no
friend ?

Mr. GRANDISON.

When I inform you of a friend
you have at home, who will be with
you, can't you guess what friend I
glance at ?

JULIANA.

Sly ! Why, sure you understand Papa ? he glances at himself.

Mr. GRANDISON.

Yes, Victor ; for you recollect just now you said, I *was* your friend,

VICTOR.

O yes ; they'll play indeed, if you are of the party !

Mr. GRANDISON.

Therefore, you shall not inform them who that friend is you expect. As soon as I have finish'd my petition, I'll return and join you. I shall see what's proper to be done. 'Till then, play with them, and at any game they chuse.

The **LITTLE GAMBLERS.** 97

VICTOR.

So then you'd have me run to Rupert and his friends?

Mr. GRANDISON.

Yes, yes : and don't forget desiring Bernard's company. I shall be glad to see him. All his masters praise him wonderfully, and yourself have frequently been lavish in his commendations.

JULIANA.

But he merits every tittle of it.

VICTOR.

One word more, sir ; shall we meet here in the garden ?

Mr. GRANDISON.

As you please. The weather is so fine, you may appoint them in the

98 *The* **LITTLE GAMBLERS.**

summer house. (*Victor goes out*) He
gone: let's follow him. And take
our station near the summer-house
as we are walking, I'll inform you
my reason.

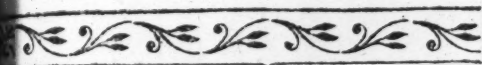
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A C T II.

S C E N E I.

Mr. GRANDISON, and JULIANA.

Mr. GRANDISON.

WE are here : and now, I need not
fear they'll be before me, and do any
thing I shall not notice.

JULIANA.

You are in the right, sir, to take
this precaution ; as I fear your pre-

100 *The LITTLE GAMBLERS*
fence will be much more necessary
here than mine.

MR. GRANDISON.

You fear?

JULIANA.

Yes, sir; for I have told you, Mr. Bernard was not long since with me. From some words he drop'd, I've reason to believe my brother's company have laid a plot to cheat him of his money.

MR. GRANDISON.

All the better: if he finds himself their victim. I will hide myself behind the summer house, there just by that partition, and hear every word they say. They'll enter here and cannot possibly discover me but in the interim, take you care

The **LITTLE GAMBLERS.** 101

and if you see their roguery, seem as you did not.

JULIANA.

I shall find it hard, sir, to dissemble. It will be painful to me, should I see my brother prove the object of their ridicule, and fall a victim to his open nature.

Mr. GRANDISON.

By himself alone can he be fully deceiv'd ; as with the greater ease, shall in that case, get him to be more tentative for the future, in the choice of his connections, and so cure him likewise of his love for gaming, which, I must acknowledge, he seems ready to give into.

JULIANA.

How, sir, can he have a thought of

going thus to cards? He ought to know himself. He is so credulous that every sharper must suppose him proper for his purpose! and so warm that at the first ill luck he falls into a passion!

MR. GRANDISON.

Yes, that's just his character. I did not think you so observant, Juliana.

JULIANA.

One should be in truth, observant of another's conduct, if one means to serve him. And—

MR. GRANDISON.

A knock; it must be Rupert's friends: they don't desire to lose a moment. I now leave you. I'll go

The LITTLE GAMBLERS. 103

and about, and gain my station.

He goes out.)

JULIANA, (*alone,*)

How I long to know the issue of
this! Alas! dear brother! who
can tell but that your future happi-
ness in life depends on the decision
of the present afternoon!

S C E N E II.

JULIANA, VICTOR, RUPERT, BER-
NARD, RICH, BOYD, and CRIB,

RUPERT, (*to Juliana,*)

Was afraid, Miss Juliana, as your
father knows, our company might

incommode you : but he would not

VICTOR.

Incommode her ! I'm in hope
she'll keep us company.

JULIANA.

With all my heart, if you think
proper, gentlemen.

BOYD, (*with constraint,*)

You do us honour, Madam.

CRIB, (*whispering Rupert,*)

This is quite unlucky ! In politeness,
we must play the game she likes.
You should not have consented
to come here.

VICTOR.

Perhaps I shall be able, gentlemen,
to introduce a friend of mine to your
acquaintance likewise.

RICHARD.

The

Shall

Yes,

gold

That

We'

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Do

Wh

Vo

RICH.

Shall you ?

VICTOR.

Yes, and not without a pocket-full
gold.

RUPERT, (*aside*,)

That's well.

JULIANA.

We'll stay here in the garden, if
you please.

BERNARD.

We can't do better. We shall
have the pleasure of a charming walk.

RICH.

Do you design to walk ?

BERNARD.

What else ?

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BOYD.

Why play ?

BERNARD.

But I don't understand your play
and if I did, I shall not wish to lose
my money.

CRIB.

Wish to lose it ! just as if 'twere
certain you would lose it !

BERNARD.

Sir, with you particularly. You're
too skilful by a deal for me.

VICTOR.

If I should win, I promise I'll
turn you every farthing.

RUPERT.

And I too.

RICH and BOYD.

And we.



RS. *The LITTLE GAMBLERS.* 107

BERNARD.

You'd make a fool of me. To
lose my money and receive it back,
or on the other hand, win your's and
keep it, is not what I do: so don't
concern yourselves on my account.
I'll see you play, or else walk up and
down the garden, hereabouts.

JULIANA.

My father, gentlemen, can't have
the honour to receive you. (*Rich and
his company seem rejoic'd.*) but has bid
me entertain you. Victor will get
ready some refreshments, and I'll run
and fetch the cards.

CRIB.

That's needless: I've a pack about
me.

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VICTOR.

How ! about you ?

CRIB.

Yes : I study them.

JULIANA.

And have you fish too ?

CRIB.

I shall beg you'll get us them ; unless we are to stake our money.

RUPERT, (*aside to Crib,*)

You remember I've no money ?

(*aloud*) No, no : we shall hardly know what we're about. And so Miss, if you'll be so kind—

JULIANA.

Enough, I'll bring the bag. Come brother.

The LITTLE GAMBLERS, IC

S C E N E III.

RUPERT, BERNARD, RICH, BOYD,
and CRIB.

BOYD, (*going into the summer house
with Rupert, Rich and Crib, while
Bernard walks about,*)

I Am sorry we are here.

RICH.

What matters, since the father is
not here?

CRIB.

You should not have consented to
the place of meeting, Rupert.

110 *The* **LITTLE GAMBLERS.**

RUPERT.

Here, or in my room; what difference does that make?

RICH.

And then, when Victor has lost every thing, we'll carry off his money, and go play where we think proper.

BOYD.

We shall empty, very likely, the young lady's pocket also.

CRIB.

Yes; that's what I look for: let's take care, however. We'll put in our fish at twopence each, for half a dozen deals or so; and when the game grows warm, and they have won a little, we'll then make them double.

The **LITTLE GAMBLERS.** 111

RUPERT.

You remember, Crib, your promise?

CRIE.

Don't you be uneasy. We know one another. All our loss shall be in counters, and we'll have no reckoning, when the game is over. I'll dispose the cards in such a way, that we must lose at first, and that will draw them on.

RUPERT.

But, Crib, you know you fleec'd me quite, the other day; and I have now but six-pence in my pocket. How am I to pay my loss?

CRIE.

Your loss! we shall be sure to win, if we attend to what we do. H 4

BOYD.

I should be glad, if Victor's friend would come : he'll be another pigeon we shall pluck.

RICH.

Yes, yes ! I know of none so easy to be dup'd, as these same bookish fellows.

CRIB.

We had best begin, that they may find us busy when they come. (*He takes his cards out*) Stay ; I'll put them so that you may lose. (*He shuffles them.*) Now you shall see. (*He gives three cards to Rupert, Rich, and Boyd, lays down as many for himself, and then addresses Rupert.*) Do you stand ?

The **LITTLE GAMBLERS.** 113

RUPERT.

No: beg.

CRIB.

There.

RUPERT, (*looking at the cards,*)

Out!

CRIB, (*to Boyd,*)

And you?

BOYD.

One card; but not a high one.

CRIB.

Much good may it do you!—there.

BOYD.

Out too!

CRIB, (*to Rich,*)

Now you are to be out. You beg,
I fancy?

RICH.

No; As Boyd and Rupert are
both out, I stand.

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CRIB.

And so will I. How many are you?

BOYD.

Twenty-five.

CRIB.

And I just thirty. I have won: And yet, I might have lost by doing the reverse of what I did; as you shall see, the two first games we play, when Victor and the lady comes, who having won, will then have no objection to play higher.

RUPERT.

But how can you be sure of winning when you please?

CRIB.

You have already paid for your instruction; and I'll let you know the

The **LITTLE GAMBLERS.** 115

secret. I tell every thing to friends,
when I have pocketed their money.
With my art you'll win of others,
what you've lost with me, and so be
quits.

RUPERT.

Well, let me know.

CRIB.

You see, (*showing the cards,*) the
ten and court cards are a very little
longer than the rest, and all the smaller
ones, as high as five, not reckoning in
the aces, somewhat broader ; by which
means I can at pleasure bring the pic-
ture cards, &c. to the top, in shuffling,
and the five, and those below it, to
the bottom. I contrive to give you
two of those on top ; and afterward,
the other from the bottom : so that

116 *The LITTLE GAMBLERS.*

at the most, you have but five and twenty, and will therefore generally beg. Well then, you have it from the top, and must, infallibly, be out,

RUPERT.

I understand you.

CRIB.

This is all my lesson ; and you have it upon easy terms : ask Rich and Boyd else, who so profitably follow my instructions. But I see the lady coming in, so push about the deal.

The L

RUPERT

JULIA

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S C E N E IV.

RUPERT, RICH, BOYD, CRIE, and
JULIANA.

JULIANA, (*putting down a box upon
the table, with a pack of cards, and
fish and counters in it,*)

YOU don't lose any time, I see.

CRIE.

I was but showing Mr. Rupert a
new game.

RUPERT.

You'll sit down with us? We shall
have that honour?

JULIANA.

If I knew the game you play at,

BOYD.

'Tis a very easy game. 'Tis only
One and thirty.

RICH.

Had you never seen it play'd, you'll
know enough to beat us at it, by the
second deal.

JULIANA.

I know a little of it. 'Twould be,
very likely, better for me not to play
with those that know it so compleatly
as you gentlemen; however if it gives
you pleasure——

RUPERT.

O yes, Miss, the greatest in the
world.

BOYD.

And even, should you win too all
our money.

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JULIANA, (*with a smile,*)

Yes, that's my intention,

RICH.

You'll be scarce the richer for it,
at the end ; we play but for a trifle.

RUPERT, (*with impatience,*)

Well! and what are we about?
We pass away the time in talking.

CRIB.

We must wait for Mr. Victor : 'tis
but just we should amuse him ; we're
his guests.

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SCENE V.

RUPERT, RICH, BOYD, CRIE, JULIANA, and VICTOR.

VICTOR.

HERE, here I am. The servant will be with us very shortly. I have order'd some refreshment.

RUPERT.

Come, Sir, we are waiting for you.

VICTOR.

Thank you.

BOYD.

Let's give out the fish.

RICH.

The **LITTLE GAMBLERS.** 121

RICH.

We're fix : to every one two dozen ;
and ten counters : that's ten dozen more.

RUPERT.

But how much every fish ?

CRIB.

Just what the lady pleases.

JULIANA.

O, 'tis rather as you like.

VICTOR.

Our fish were twopence each, when
last we play'd together ; five stak'd
every deal by each, and half-a-dozen
the bon-ace.

JULIANA.

Well, be it so.

CRIB.

Here's, therefore, to begin.

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122 *The* **LITTLE GAMBLERS.**

(Crib takes the cards and deals. The lady and her brother win by Crib's contrivance three times running.)

JULIANA.

Hey! hey! if we go on in this way, I shall soon fulfil my prophecy, I fancy,

CRIB.

While we play so low as twopence, we shall never ruin one another.

BOYD.

Well then, shall we make it fourpence?

VICTOR.

O, with all my heart. I've so much money, you can't break me easily.

(He shakes his purse, that Crib and his companions look at with pleasure.)

The **LITTLE GAMBLERS.** 123

JULIANA.

And I can risque as much, I fancy,
as my brother.

CRIB.

We must first then pay our debts
that we may have our full account of
fish and counters.—Let me see, (*after
having counted.*) I've lost one count-
er and six fish ; that's eighteen fish ;
and eighteen twice is six and thirty.
—just three shillings ; there they
are.

RICH.

I've all my counters ; but am
master of no more than two poor fish ;
that's two and twenty lost ; or three
and eightpence. There.

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BOYD.

I'm come off much the worst. Two counters gone, and twice as many fish; which come to four and eightpence.— I put down a crown and take up fourpence.

VICTOR.

Well, and you too, Mr. Rupert?

RUPERT.

I've lost least. No more than fifteen fish, or half-a-crown. I'll change a guinea, when we rise to pay it.

JULIANA.

Good! So now I'll see my winnings. One, two, three—Three counters and three fish. That's six and sixpence just: of which I take four shillings, and the the two and six-

The LITTLE GAMBLERS. 125

pence, Mr. Rupert, you shall owe me.

VICTOR.

So that all the rest's to pay my four and forty fish.—'Tis comical enough, however we should be the only winners!

RICH.

O, I always lose, for my part.

RUPERT.

So that now the fish are fourpence?

VICTOR.

Yes, that's settled.

CRIB, (*shuffling the cards,*)

Come, I'll deal.

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S C E N E *the Last.*

RUPERT, RICH, BOYD, CRIB, JULIANA, VICTOR, BERNARD, (*who came in a little while before,*) and Mr. GRANDISON.

Mr. GRANDISON, (*to Rupert and his friends, who seem confounded,*)

PRAY, don't disturb yourselves.

VICTOR.

Sit down: my father does not come to interrupt us. I inform'd you, I might have a friend to introduce; and he'll play with us. Won't you, Sir?

JULIANA.

O yes: pray, play; we shall be

The **LITTLE GAMBLERS.** 127

very glad to get your money, and these gentlemen, I know, will like to share it too.

Mr. GRANDISON.

With all my heart. So every one sit down. (*To Rupert, and his friends, who seem quite overwhelm'd,*) But what's the matter, gentlemen? Are you afraid to play with me? I can assure you, I'm no sharper. (*They sit down at last.*) You (*to Crib.*) were dealing, when I enter'd: so continue, pray; but first, let's see, have you a pack compleat. (*Crib wants to drop the cards, but Mr. Grandison secures and looks them over.*) 'Tis droll enough to have the court cards all together thus! but Juliana, why not

128 *The LITTLE GAMBLERS.*

give us cleaner cards ? Pray, hand me over those—

JULIANA.

'Twas not my fault, Sir ; as this gentleman (*shewing Crib*) had brought them in his pocket ; and the play was going on when I came in with ours.

MR. GRANDISON, (*to Bernard,*)

What you here, Mr. Bernard ! I am very glad to see you, but pray, don't you play then ?

BERNARD.

I had rather be a looker on : you know I've nothing, Sir, to throw away.

MR. GRANDISON.

You're in the right to think so, and your prudence merits praise. (*To Crib,*)

The **LITTLE GAMBLERS.** 129

But come, Sir ; here are better cards,
(*Crib takes them with a trembling hand.*) at least a little cleaner : what's
your game ? Pray, tell me ?

VICTOR.

One and thirty.

MR. GRANDISON.

And for what ?

JULIANA.

No more than fourpence, every
fish. I've won all this ! four shillings ;
and a two and sixpence owing me
by Mr. Rupert, who wants change.

MR. GRANDISON, (*aside,*)

Wants change ! I smell a rat !—
(*to Juliana,*) So much as **fourpence** !
that's too much a little ; but no mat-
ter, if we've all of us enough to pay

130 *The LITTLE GAMBLERS.*
our losings. So let's see your money.
Mr. Rupert, I begin with you? (*Ru-
pert is confus'd,*) What ails you? Are
you taken ill?

RUPERT.

Ye-e-es, Sir—Let me—

Mr. GRANDISON.

What's all this? one flammers, and
the others seem confounded! (*to
Crib,*) You, Sir, too are disconcert-
ed?

VICTOR.

What's the matter with them?

Mr. GRANDISON.

'Tis high time I should explain
the reason of this strange behaviour.
Victor, you observe the consequences
of a guilty conscience. Happily they
are not yet so totally abandon'd, as to

The **LITTLE GAMBLERS.** 131

hide their villainy beneath a brazen
frontispiece, and bully in their own
presence.

VICTOR.

What say you, Sir? You're sure
mistaken: 'tis my sister, as she told
you, and myself, that are the only
winners.

CRIB, (*taking courage,*)

Have we fail'd to pay our losses,
every one, but Mr. Rupert?

RUPERT.

No: but why? because you've
cheated me already out of all my
money.

Mr. GRANDISON.

I was right in thinking they'd un-
mask themselves: And Victor, you

132 *The* **LITTLE GAMBLERS.**

may see what villains you were got with.

VICTOR.

O, I can't think so, Sir.

Mr. GRANDISON.

Well then, Mr. Rupert, do you speak ; you seem least harden'd. Tell me, was there not a plot among you to defraud my children ?

RUPERT.

Yes, indeed Sir ; but for my part, I assure you, I was forc'd into it. All my wish was to get back a part of what I had beforehand lost. If you but knew how much this wicked fellow has squeez'd from me, for the other two are nothing to him, you would say he should be sent to prison.

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Mr. GRANDISON.

You have well deserv'd your loss, by mixing with such company: but tell me, how much you have lost?

RUPERT.

Two guineas, and a few odd shillings with them all together; and my watch, coat buttons, buckles, and a guinea more in money afterwards, in private, with the tallest: but the guinea I still owe him; and he threaten'd, if I got not Mr. Victor to sit down and play this evening, he would tell my father.

BERNARD.

This, Sir, I can say in Rupert's favour, that he gave me just the same count this morning, and was grieved

at what he thought himself compelled to. The grand criminal is Crib, the tallest; the two others in comparison—

MR. GRANDISON.

I comprehend what you would say and therefore, (*to Rich and Boyd,*) little rascals, get you gone this instant. Possibly, 'tis not, as yet too late, that I should think of rescuing you from infamy; and therefore, I'll inform your parents of your conduct.

RICH and BOYD, (*dropping on their knees,*)

Pardon us, this once, Sir, we beseech you; and we'll never come again within your doors.

MR. GRANDISON.

That's what I mean: but then, 'tis

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not enough my children should be safe in future from your roguery, I owe the same good service to all fathers. What perversity ! at such an age not only to be gamblers, but vile cheats ! the hatefulest of men ! However, out of pity to your youth, and from the hope I have of your amendment, I will do no more than tell your parents ; but if ever I am told you still continue your detestable employment, I'll make known your infamy to every one about us. So be gone, and never let me see you here again. Be gone, I say. (*Rich and Boyd withdraw in silence and confusion.*) And you, sir, is it true, that you have got these things from Rupert ?

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CRIB, (*with hesitation.*)

Yes, Sir.

MR. GRANDISON.

You have cheated him, but that's no matter; Rupert lost them, and has merited his fortune. We will put a value on them.

RUPERT.

I could wish, indeed, I had sufficient to redeem my loss.

BERNARD.

Oh, Sir, if all I'm master of suffices, Rupert may command it. I have full five guineas; take them for the service of my friend.

MR. GRANDISON.

You have a generous nature, Victor!

The LITTLE GAMBLERS. 137

RUPERT.

What, to me such friendship!

VICTOR.

We are neighbours both, and you may pay me weekly, or in any way you please.

(Crib gives Rupert his things.)

MR. GRANDISON, *(to Rupert,)*

Is every thing return'd you?

RUPERT.

Yes, Sir; and I'm fav'd, by your and Victor's generosity, from the resentment of my father. Oh, I'll never risque his gifts again in such a manner.

MR. GRANDISON, *(offering Crib the money,)*

Here's the value of your theft; for

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such it must be call'd, and you shall have it to subsist upon in prison, till you're called to answer for your crime, as possibly you may not have the means without it. Nay, expect not, by solicitation, to divert the rigor of my justice. Your seduction of two youths, your felony upon the property of this young man, and your attempt to make him instrumental in the robbery of another, well deserve that rigour. This must be your sentence; so withdraw a little for the present.

(Crib withdraws, and weeps for very rage.)

RUPERT, *(falling on his knees to Mr. Grandison,)*

O! dear Sir! from what a gulph

The **LITTLE GAMBLERS.** 139

of ruin you preserve me! And without you what would not have been my evil fortune, when thrust out from home, and, very likely, stigmatiz'd in public for my vices? I am then indebted to your pity for my reputation, my repose, and my existence. (*He rises, and embraces Victor.*) And my generous Victor, you that I was going—

VICTOR.

Utterly forget it, as I do; and for the time to come, be happy.

MR. GRANDISON.

Mr. Bernard's testimony of your grief at being forced into this plot alleviates your offence; and therefore, you may still continue visiting my son; but, after what he has just

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done in your behalf, I shall account you the most profligate of youths, unless you study to deserve his friendship.

RUPERT.

Oh, I will do so. Rely upon me, Sir.

Mr. GRANDISON.

And as for you, dear Bernard, I have reason to be charmed with what so many tongues have told me of your modesty and virtue.—By your laudable example, you may very much contribute to the happiness of Victor.—I request you to be often with him; and if I can shew my gratitude by being serviceable to your happiness, I shall promote it with

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as much affection as your parents would do.

BERNARD.

Your esteem, dear Sir, is happiness sufficient for me.

Mr. GRANDISON.

You observe, dear children, the unhappy consequences that result from gaming?

VICTOR.

Yes, Sir, and shall shudder all my life at the idea of them.

Mr. GRANDISON.

You observe too, Victor, with what care and circumspection one should chuse a friend?

VICTOR.

Yes, that too, Sir; and am con-

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vinced how happy 'tis for me to have a
friend, as I have said already, in my
father.



End of Vol. XV.